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sway over succeeding composers. "Devout," indeed, surely are the noble services of Gibbons, and Farrant, and Blow, and their glorious brethren; but "distinct"—what shall we say? Yet even here must it be borne in mind, that when those great men wrote, assembled guests in astonishment could "demand how was brought up" the ignoramus who "protested unfeignedly" that he could not sing at sight the part of a madrigal shared out to him by the mistress of the house,—that the cittern then supplied the place of the modern newspaper for the amusement of the barber's waiting customer. "Distinct," music might seem then to the general ear that now sounds mere confusion. But are we to consider Cranmer's opinion as tying us down entirely to such artificial renderings of our Great Church Hymns; for the *natural* rendering clearly must be *illustrative*, the music sympathetically changing with the changes of sentiment in the words. All that can be said against such natural renderings is the extra time they necessarily require. Let us grant the wisdom of Cranmer's directions when applied to the ordinary daily service of our cathedrals and larger parish churches, and who would deny it? But on our High Festivals—surely we need not be tied down to acknowledged conventionalities, for the saving of a few minutes on such days. Let that art which alone of arts has promise of entrance into Heaven, then have her full sway, and do her best to bring home to our hearts and spirits the holy words with which she is entrusted. Let the Service, then, have the same license that the 49th Injunction of Elizabeth grants to the anthem. Let it be "to the praise of Almighty God, in the best sort of melody and music that may conveniently be devised, having respect that the sentence of the hymn may be understood and perceived." And but small extra time, after all, will be needed for such high services on high days, as a Purcell of old and a Macfarren in our days have proved. If still there be the cry "too long," why let us give up that startling anomaly in our service, the Nicene Creed. Let it be content with the plain chant, like the Apostles' Creed. Surely why not? What business has a Creed with the music of a Canticle?

But we must pass on to the Church's Metrical Hymn.

(To be continued.)

ROYAL ENGLISH OPERA.

"L'AFRICAIN," with everything but the title translated into English, was the opera chosen for the opening night at this establishment, which took place on Saturday, the 21st ult. Our impressions with regard to the merits of this work have been already fully stated on its production at the Royal Italian Opera; and as by inferior vocalists its musical beauties must inevitably become lessened, whilst its dramatic defects, from its translation into the vernacular, must become heightened, the opinions we then expressed are not likely to be more favorable on the present occasion. That Meyerbeer considered this opera as his *chef d'œuvre* is only one more proof that a composer is very often the worst judge of his own works; for, although in the progress of the five long acts we have undoubted proofs of power, and even genius, there can be no question that the *Huguenots*, *Robert le Diable*, and even *Le Prophète*, will be known and acted long after *L'Africain* is utterly forgotten. The performance of the opera was on the whole extremely good by the English company. The *Inez* of Madame Sherrington, and the *Selika* of Miss Louisa Pyne, afford evidence that we have native vocalists able to grapple with the peculiar difficulties of Meyerbeer's music. There is a refinement about Madame Sherrington which invariably wins the sympathies of her audience; and her vocalization is always true, even if the voice occasionally lacks the power requisite for a large arena. Mr. Charles Adams has made a rapid stride in public estimation by his singing and acting as *Vasco di Gama*. It is a somewhat thankless part—a sort of Portuguese *Polka*, in fact—and the music, unlike most of Meyerbeer's tenor heroes, has few telling points, but Mr. Adams sang like an artist throughout the opera; and he is gaining in his knowledge of the stage. Mr. Alberto Laurence gave occasional proofs not only of an excellent voice, but of a good style, in the part of *Nelusco*; but he

has yet to learn not to force his powers to that point where energy degenerates into coarseness. Mr. J. G. Patey sang well, as the High Priest of Brahma; and Mr. Henry Corri deserves a word of praise for his performance of the President of the Council. The minor parts were creditably filled by Mr. E. Dussek, Mr. Charles Lyall, and Mr. and Mrs. Aynsley Cook. The opera was exceedingly well received by the audience; the "unison" passage being, as usual, followed by such a storm of applause that Miss Pyne was not permitted to sing a note until it had been played three times. The orchestra, under the able direction of Mr. Alfred Mellon, was everything that could be desired; and the chorus shewed evident signs of good training. The theatre was so crowded that there was scarcely standing-room in any part of the house. Amongst the announcements for the present season are Mr. Henry Leslie's new opera, *Ida*, and Mr. Charles Deffel's *Christmas Eve* (which was performed some time ago at the Crystal Palace), so that the "English Opera Company" appears resolved to have some valid reason for its national title.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

A SHORT season was commenced at this establishment on the 23rd ult., with every prospect of success. The opening opera was *Faust*, with Madlle. Titiens as the heroine, and Madlle. Sarolta in the part of *Siebel*, a character admirably suited to her. Mr. Santley and Signor Gardoni sang with even more than their ordinary vigour; and Signor Bossi was a very excellent *Mephistopheles*. *Fidelio* and *Der Freischütz* are included in the list of operas for the season.

NEW ROYALTY THEATRE.

A NEW Opera, in two acts, called *Felix*, or the *Festival of Roses*, the lyrical libretto by Mr. John Oxenford, and the music by Herr Meyer Lutz, was produced at this theatre on the 23rd ult. The plot is scarcely probable enough for real life, but "opera life" claims a special licence; and we are not prepared to say that *Felix* is more absurd than many stories that we could name which have been "lyrically" arranged for operatic purposes. The *Prince of Provence* (Mr. E. Connell) and *Count Felix* (Mr. Elliot Galer) are in love with *Amelia* (Miss Blanche Galton), and the *Countess of Martigne* (Miss Susan Galton); and in order to test the constancy of the ladies, each agrees to woo the other's mistress. "The plan's absurd," as they both admit (and we quite agree with them); but it is nevertheless put into practice; and because the ladies (who have overheard the plot, and join in a quartet in front of the stage, without being noticed by their lovers) are inclined to listen to their addresses, the gentlemen resolve to go out in search of adventures, and make love to every pretty girl they meet. The ladies, of course, resolve to follow them; and in the disguise of gypsies, encounter their runaway swains; and after a series of adventures, bring them to repentance and marriage. The music in this opera is unequal: in parts trifling and uninteresting, but here and there betraying unmistakable signs that the composer has studied in a good school. We may at once say that it is not a music-seller's opera; the best things being undoubtedly the concerted pieces which cannot be cut up for sale. As a solo, the ballad for the *soprano* in the second act, "Sleep, thou fickle rover, sleep," is so far superior to the rest, as almost to appear written by another hand. Many of the pieces where the dramatic action is musically treated have, however, a high degree of merit, especially the trio in the second act, "Wonderful! wonderful! who would have thought," in which, in addition to some extremely clever vocal writing, the orchestra is handled with consummate skill. Miss Susan Galton sang well throughout the opera, making quite an effect in a long *scena*, evidently written for display. Miss Blanche Galton acted the small part of *Amelia*, and sang the little music allotted to her agreeably, and without pretence; Mr. Elliot Galer manages his voice well; and knowing the limit of his power, wisely refrains from attempting to soar beyond it. Mr. Connell, Mr. Bentley (in the character of the rustic lover, *Lucas*), and Mr. Gaston Smith, as the *Bailie*, are also entitled to praise; whilst Miss Fanny Reeves, as the *belle* of the village, gave the whole of her music with much archness and vivacity. The orchestra (though small) was extremely efficient, especially in the stringed instruments; and the scenery was beyond what we should expect on so limited a stage. The opera was highly successful; and the composer was called forward to receive the congratulations of the audience.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

THE Saturday Concerts, to which all the season-ticket holders so longingly look forward, were resumed on the 7th ult., under the direction of the zealous and able conductor, Mr. Manns. At the second concert, after Haydn's ever-welcome Symphony in B flat (No. 8), a very excellent first appearance was made by Herr Döhler, a violinist from New York. To a pure and legitimate tone, Herr Döhler unites a true mechanism; and although perfectly master of his instrument, he is never tempted into that mere love of display which too often degenerates into trickery. We could have wished that he had made his appeal to an English audience in something better than his own showy Fantasia from *Rigoletto*; but we have little doubt, from the enthusiasm with which he was received, that we shall shortly hear him in a composition more worthy of his powers. Herr Taubert's Overture to the *Tempest* is more flat and uninteresting than we should have expected from the works of this composer which have from time to time come before us. Gounod's excellent music from *Treize*, however, made ample amends for this comparative failure. There is a life and freshness about these com-

positions which must force them into notice, in spite of the difficulties surrounding the *libretto* of the opera from which they are taken. We regret that the selection from Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine*, which was announced in the programme, could not be performed in consequence of a prohibition from the Royal English Opera Company. We presume that they have the right, but we question the policy, of preventing the performance of a work which must require some considerable forcing before it can become popular in England. At the Concert on the following Saturday, Handel's *Acis and Galatea* was given, with Miss Edmonds, Messrs. G. Perren, Montem Smith, and Weiss, for the principal characters.

THE CONCORDIA CHOIR.

THIS Society for six seasons past has devoted itself almost exclusively to the production of works which amateurs have but little opportunity of practising. The rehearsals of the seventh season have already commenced, being held as usual in the large room, Bay-street, Middleton-road, Kingsland, under the direction of Mr. William Volkman, who has selected Cherubini's celebrated Requiem Mass for the first effort of the season. Arrangements have been made to accommodate a much larger number of members; and the "Address" just published, informs us that the speciality of the Society in performing little known master-pieces will be strictly maintained. A policy so progressive should command success.

THE opposition of Lord Dudley, to the Worcester Festival has had the effect of testing the general feeling so thoroughly as to set the question permanently at rest; and we are happy to say that the Festival of the Three Choirs is likely, in consequence, to be placed on a more solid foundation than ever. We learn from the *Worcestershire Chronicle* that the Dean and Chapter, at a meeting in the Chapter-room, "agreed to grant the use of the Cathedral and College-hall, as usual, for the Musical Festival next year, agreeably to the request made to them by the committee formed for the promotion of the Festival."

THE Meeting of the Church Congress at Norwich, which commenced on the 3rd ult., has not been the means of calling forth any startling opinions on the present state of ecclesiastical music, although the much-vexed question of the Anglican and Gregorian Chant has been again ventilated. The illustrated lecture, by the Rev. J. B. Dykes, Mus. Doc., was an intellectual attempt to disprove what we should imagine even the wildest Gregorian fanatic would scarcely believe, that "God's ancient people" as the lecturer termed them, could ever have handed down any set form of scale to be exclusively used in divine worship. There can be no doubt that the Church Tunes served their purpose exceedingly well in their day; but as music advanced as a science, the ear became less satisfied with this crude form of chant, and "Gregorianism" on its own merits, and not from its old associations, speedily found the utmost difficulty in asserting its power. Dr. Dykes, on the whole, appeared clearly in favour of adopting exclusively the Anglican Chant; but we regret that there was no discussion upon the question, as it appears perfectly fair that at a "Congress" everybody who brings some knowledge upon the subject should be permitted to speak. During the meeting the Dean of Ely read a paper, in which he warmly advocated the necessity of upholding the Cathedral Service so as "to stimulate both the singers and composers of Church music;" and in the discussion which followed, some able remarks were made on the subject by the Venerable Archdeacon Lord Arthur Hervey, and Mr. A. J. B. Beresford Hope, M.P.

"THE Statics of Harmony," by James Barnhill, M.A., is a thoughtful work, by a man who evidently thoroughly comprehends his subject; and not only reasons himself, but is well acquainted with the reasonings of those who have preceded him. The difficulty of establishing a real basis on which to found a system of Harmony has ever been the almost impossibility of steering a middle course between those theorists who derive all their laws from harmonics, insisting on what our author truly terms "microscopical accuracy," and those who, disregarding this extreme accuracy, endeavour to devise a method by which the student may clothe his ideas in a sufficiently grammatical form for practical purposes. It would be impossible in our limited space to do more than draw attention to Mr. Barnhill's work; but we may say that a perusal of it has convinced us that much more *simplicity* will be required before it can be used as a book for students who are commencing the study of Harmony. A tyro should not be told, we think, that the root of a chord is that note "*above* which the ear is most satisfied to hear the other notes of which the chord is composed." He must first be informed what is the root, as a *fact*, and the reason may come afterwards. As Mr. Barnhill professedly intends his work as a manual for those who have made some practical proficiency in the art, this matter may be worth consideration; for, in teaching, we think it of the utmost importance to convey a knowledge of rules so firmly and confidently that there may be no danger of an intelligent pupil out-reasoning his master.

THE last number of the "Quarterly Journal of Science" contains an interesting article on the "Quality of Musical Sounds," by W. Stevens Squire, Ph.D. Our author very truly observes that the physical principles which regulate the quality of sound are very little, if at all, understood, even by the manufacturers of musical instruments; the various improvements from time to time being carried out more from observation and experiment than from actual knowledge. Many of Dr. Squire's remarks—especially those upon wind instruments—show that he has thoroughly studied his subject; and musicians, whether amateur or professional, may gain much valuable information from a perusal of the article.

A SMALL pamphlet, called "Thoughts on the Daily Choral Service in Carlisle Cathedral," has been issued by Dean Close, in which he eloquently defends the use of Music in the Cathedral Service, and endeavours to prove that the anthem has the effect of awakening the religious feeling, and disposing the heart to pure devotion in a much higher degree than can ever be effected by the mere reading of the sacred words. This pamphlet is well timed; and, as the Dean announces that he intends to "maintain the services of Carlisle Cathedral in the greatest possible efficiency," we hope that his laudable zeal in the cause may be seconded by those who have power and influence in the city.

THE Choir Benevolent Fund gave a Grand Choral Festival in the Cathedral of Canterbury, in aid of the funds of the Society, on the 19th ult. The choir was selected from Her Majesty's Chapel Royal, the Royal Chapel of St. George, Windsor, St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, the Cathedrals of Canterbury, Rochester, Eton College, &c. In the evening a performance of Glee, Madrigals, Part-Songs, &c., was given in the Music Hall, St. Margaret's Street, in which the Members of the various choirs were assisted by the Orpheus Glee Union.

ON Tuesday, the 10th ult., the Choir of the Clapham Grammar School presented Mr. John G. Boardman, their Organist and Choirmaster, with a very handsome marble Time-piece in token of their regard and gratitude for his great kindness to them during an interval of nearly twenty years.

ON Tuesday, the 17th ult., a miscellaneous Concert was given in the School Rooms, Star Corner, Bermondsey, in aid of the Working Men's Institute by Mr. E. Bernard, assisted by the Misses Annie Howard Lucy Hart, and Jenny Vaughan; and Messrs. Felix Sydney, and George Stanley; and chorus of about 40 voices. Conductor, Mr. F. R. Hart; Pianist, Mr. Paul Jerrard, Organist of St. Paul's, Lorrimer square.

IN the decease of Herr Ernst, which occurred at Nice, on the 8th ult., the art can scarcely perhaps be truly said to have sustained a loss, for ill health had so long incapacitated him from the exercise of his profession that few of the young frequenters of concerts have ever heard him. To record the impression produced by his performance, when in the full possession of his powers, becomes, however, necessary now that his career is closed; for the history of violin playing scarcely contains the name of one—with the exception, perhaps, of Paganini—who so thoroughly felt and expressed upon his instrument, the true poetry of art. As a generous-hearted man too, as well as a conscientious artist, his name will be long remembered by those who had the happiness of his acquaintance.

OUR obituary this month, too, includes the name of Mr. W. Vincent Wallace, who has also been for some time in a declining state of health. As an operatic composer, he held a considerable reputation; but we are inclined to think that he will be chiefly known by his *Mariana*, although *Lurline* was highly successful at the time; and the *Amber Witch* was perhaps the most carefully elaborated of all his Operas. Mr. Wallace was a native of Ireland; and as a violinist and pianist, he led a wandering life in his early years, the details of which appear almost like a romance. He died at a Chateau in the south of France, on the 12th ult. The funeral took place at the Kensal-green Cemetery on the 23rd ult., many of the principal members of the musical profession being present to pay the final homage to the memory of their deceased friend. There was little pomp or ceremony to mark the mournful occasion; but the mute grief of those who pressed around to sob a last farewell as the coffin was lowered, was more eloquent, as a tribute of respect to their brother artist, than all the studied orations that could have been delivered over his grave.

THE death of Signor Guiglini will scarcely surprise those who knew how hopeless has been his case for some time. He died at the Lunatic Asylum at Pesaro on the 12th ult., and his body was removed the next day to his native town in the Roman States.

MADAME Caradori Allan, a Vocalist, who at one time held a high position in public estimation, is also lately deceased.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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